

# Ethicists debate moral response to terrorism

By Laurie Hansen  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The blurred image of what appeared to be a lifeless U.S. hostage hanging from a rope, his shadow swaying on a nearby wall, produced indignation nationwide last week.

President Bush spoke for many U.S. citizens when he expressed his "outrage" at the "brutal murder" of Marine Lt. Col. William R. Higgins, a member of U.N. peacekeeping forces in Lebanon who was accused of being a U.S. spy.

Acts of terrorism — "selective attacks on civilians and random attacks whose effects are to frighten and to make people feel insecure" — appear to be replacing nuclear war as the major threat facing humanity, according to William V. O'Brien, a professor of government at Jesuit-run Georgetown University in Washington.

In O'Brien's view, it's likely the "whole nuclear question will remain dormant" as long as Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev remains in power.

Terrorism, "by and large the weapon of the weak," is used primarily by Third World nations or militia whose "prospects for winning in war are poor," according to Jesuit Father John Langan, Rose Kennedy professor of Christian ethics at George-

town's Kennedy Institute of Ethics.

The Lebanese Shiites who abducted Higgins, for example, he said, "can say to the United States: 'Do this, otherwise we'll kill your civilians.' They can't say to the United States: 'We'll beat your army.'"

The Organization for the Oppressed on Earth, a pro-Iranian Lebanese Shiite Moslem group, said July 31 it had hanged Higgins in retaliation for the Israeli kidnapping of Sheik Abdul Karim Obeid, a Shiite clerical leader, and two aides. The group provided a videocassette tape showing a blindfolded man said to be Higgins hanging from a rope.

Prior to his kidnapping, Sheik Obeid had publicly approved of the abduction of Higgins. Israeli officials said the sheik was involved in planning the abduction.

How to discourage terrorism, whether to negotiate with terrorists in order to free remaining hostages, and whether military retaliation for terrorist acts can be justified are among questions raised by the Higgins tragedy. Reportedly, eight U.S. citizens are still being held hostage in Lebanon.

While the U.S. bishops' 1983 pastoral letter on war and peace focused on nuclear deterrence and warfare, "there is a real gap" in Catholic social teaching on "revolutionary war, terrorism and assassina-



CNS  
Pope John Paul II reaches out to well-wishers following his general audience Aug. 2, the day the Vatican announced the pope would help mediate the return of the body of Marine Lt. Col. William Higgins.

tion," according to O'Brien. However, he says, some judgments can be made by extrapolating from just-war theory, which was outlined in the classic sense by St. Augustine.

In principle, a hostage-rescue mission is justifiable, in Father Langan's view.

But if U.S. hostages are hidden in a

crowded city like Beirut, as appears to be the current case, measures must be taken to ensure that innocent people will not be harmed, he said.

Before approving any kind of hostage-rescue mission, "you have to have a reasonable expectation of doing more good

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# Blacks fought too hard to quit church, prelate says

By Rita McInerney  
Catholic News Service

ATLANTA — Black Catholics have fought too hard in the past to give up on the Catholic Church now, Archbishop Eugene A. Marino of Atlanta told lay black Catholics attending a national conference.

"We're not going to abandon Jesus. We're not going to leave this church. Our fathers have struggled too hard, endured too many sacrifices, to give up," he said.

"We're not going to be turned out, turned away. We're going to stay with the Roman Catholic Church... We've paid too much for our membership," said Archbi-

shop Marino, the nation's only black archbishop.

He made the comments at an Aug. 5 liturgy during the four-day meeting of the National Office for Black Catholics at Emory University in Atlanta. Archbishop Marino is episcopal adviser to the organization.

The conference came little more than a week after black Catholic clergy meeting in Milwaukee announced they would study creation of an African-American rite within the church.

"Creating a Spirit of African-American Leadership" was the theme of the Atlanta

conference, which had some 400 participants.

Discussion of a separate rite emerged after Father George A. Stallings, former evangelist for the Archdiocese of Washington, founded the Imani Temple for black Catholics in Washington July 2. Cardinal James A. Hickey of Washington subsequently suspended Father Stallings for celebrating unauthorized liturgies.

Although some observers have suggested Father Stallings is asking black Catholics to leave the church, he has insisted Imani Temple is a Catholic church.

Walter Hubbard, executive director of

the National Office for Black Catholics, told Catholic News Service in an Aug. 7 interview that contrary to news reports saying the organization's board voted to back the proposed rite, there had been no vote taken at the meeting.

"We are asking for reconciliation. Cardinal Hickey had been a good shepherd to us in the Archdiocese of Washington. Father Stallings is a good priest. We want reconciliation. That's all we've said. Period," Hubbard said.

Sister Thea Bowman, a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration and director of intercultural awareness for the Diocese of Jackson, Miss., told meeting participants Aug. 5 that "Father Stallings has all of us being taken seriously now.

"Some folks who didn't have anything to say to us are now ready to engage in conversation," Sister Bowman told to an applauding audience.

In an Aug. 4 keynote address, New York Cardinal John J. O'Connor told meeting participants that church leadership must do everything it can to get rid of racism in the hearts of Catholics.

"We have to realize that it is a sin, an obscenity that must be driven out of the church," he said.

The key issue of racism "won't be denied," said Cardinal O'Connor. "Of course there is racism, deep rooted and widespread. I do not believe the church is a racist institute. It is the body of Christ. But many of us are racist," he said.

While acknowledging more needs to be done, Cardinal O'Connor said the church has done a lot to combat racism "thanks to our black bishops who have needed us, encouraged us and supported us.

"Blacks must become leaders among blacks," he said. "It is time for the church to grow up and for blacks to assume (the) role of leadership," he said.

Christ's leadership was demonstrated not by his miracles, but by "hanging on a cross with people spitting in his face," said Cardinal O'Connor. "If he had come down from the cross he would have been a miserable failure," the cardinal said.

"You have suffered and will continue to suffer," he told the mostly black audience. "You must buy into the crucifixion of Christ, pray, meditate, read the Gospels, unite in holy Communion."

# Quayle praises Knights' values, volunteer work

BALTIMORE (CNS) — In Baltimore Aug. 1-3 for their 107th Supreme Council, Knights of Columbus from the United States and other nations heard a plea for strong family policy from Vice President Dan Quayle and established two \$2-million funds for Catholic education.

Supreme Knight Virgil Dechant pledged U.S. Knights to a long struggle to end legalized abortion. At a news conference after the meeting, he described a resolution by the Knights, committing them to an extensive pro-life campaign and support for a human life amendment to the U.S. Constitution, as the most important action of the convention.

Some 2,000 Knights and their wives, representing nearly 1.5 million members in the United States, Canada, Mexico, the Philippines and other nations, gathered at the Baltimore Convention Center for the three-day meeting.

Dechant called the attitude toward abortion of a new Supreme Court majority an opportunity for the Knights to press for reversal of the court's 1973 decision that prohibited virtually all legal restrictions on abortion.

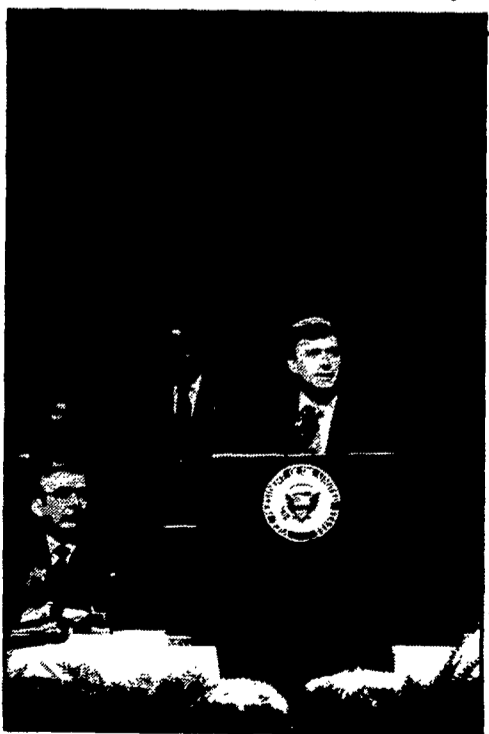
He said a new high court decision in July permitting some forms of state restriction on abortion "went far but not yet far enough."

Dechant also urged new efforts to promote vocations to the priesthood and religious life and reverse the "serious shortage of new vocations."

One of the actions taken by the Knights at a business session was the formation of a

new \$2-million national fund to help local councils provide scholarships to candidates for the priesthood and religious life.

The Knights formed another fund of at least \$2 million to finance projects and activities of The Catholic University of America in Washington, a national Catholic university established by the country's



CNS  
Vice President Dan Quayle urged a family oriented public policy when he spoke Aug. 1 to the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus.

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